

Dade Heritage Trust



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Historic Preservation Center

190 Southeast 12th Terrace

Miami, Florida 33131 Mr. Seymour Gelber, Mayor, Miami Beach

Phone: 305 / 358-9572 and Commissioners

Fax: 305 / 358-1162

December 5, 1991

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Dear Mayor Gelber and Commissioners:

As Executive Director of Dade Heritage Trust, a county-wide historic preservation organization, I am writing to express the concern of our Board of Trustees and membership regarding the future of the Art Deco District on Miami Beach.

On Tuesday, November 26, the New York Times featured a lengthy article on the wonders and success of Miami Beach's Art Deco District. How ironic that Miami residents learned from a Miami Herald article that same day that a National Register landmark on the "fringe" of the local district and within the National Register District, the Sands Hotel, was threatened with demolition.

Had the entire one square mile National Register District been protected by local designation, a review process would have been set in motion to evaluate the demolition request. More importantly, plans for new construction on the site would have been required from the property owner. With no such controls, the community faces yet another opportunity for parking space!

Miami Beach's world famous Art Deco District is possibly the most outstanding example of the positive impact historic preservation can have on a community. In a few short years, the Beach has been transformed from a depressed residential and commercial wasteland to a vibrant, exciting and economically robust community. The "impossible" was achieved with the vision, dedication and unwavering efforts of many citizens and community leaders.

The Miami Beach City Commission now has the opportunity to provide the continuing leadership to protect and insure Miami Beach's economic growth and prevent another such tragedy as the Senator, the New Yorker and now the Sands. By supporting the local historic designation of the entire National Register District you are protecting the structures which draw millions of tourists annually - a protection of the economic future of Miami Beach and the larger Dade County community.

We strongly support this designation and look to you to insure its passing.

Louise Yarbrough
Sincerely,
Louise Yarbrough
Executive Director